



## Administrative Policies and Procedures: 11.5

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Psychological and Educational Assessment of Youth in Juvenile Justice Facilities</b>
<b>Authority:</b>	TCA 37-5-105; 37-5-106
<b>Standards:</b>	<b>ACA:</b> 3-JTS-5B-07; 3-JTS-5D-05; <b>DCS Practice Standard:</b> 8-306
<b>Application:</b>	To All Department of Children's Services Youth Development Center and Group Home Employees

### Policy Statement:

For all youth in DCS Juvenile Justice facilities, education, treatment, and placement decisions shall be based in part on the results of standardized psychological and educational assessment procedures that conform to current Professional Standards and Tennessee State Laws.

### Purpose:

To ensure youth with special needs are identified and assessed for appropriate treatment.

### Procedures:

#### A. Qualifications

Standardized test(s) and assessment materials must be administered only by qualified individuals.

##### 1. Requirements

Individuals who administer, score, interpret, and use any test or assessment instrument must meet the Professional Standards and Qualifications outlined in:

- The Test Publisher's Catalog;
- The Standards For Educational and Psychological Testing; or
- The current Tennessee Department of Education Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards, and
- Tennessee State Laws pertaining to the practice of psychology.

##### 2. Professional licensing

Psychologists, psychological examiners, and school psychologists who test DCS youth must be certified or licensed by the Tennessee Board of Examiners in Psychology or the Tennessee State Department of Education in accordance with Tennessee State Law(s).

	<p><b>3. Approval for paraprofessionals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Upon certification through DCS Volunteer Services, graduate student trainees in accredited graduate school programs of clinical, counseling, or school psychology must first obtain approval from the Mental Health Coordinator or designee from DCS Central Office before using standardized tests and assessment materials with DCS youth. They must also be under the supervision of a psychologist certified or licensed by the <u>Tennessee Board of Examiners in Psychology</u> or the Tennessee State Department of Education in accordance with Tennessee State law(s).</li><li>b) Paraprofessionals (i.e., persons other than psychologists, school psychologists, and psychological examiners) must first obtain approval from the Mental Health Coordinator or designee for DCS Central Office before using standardized tests and assessment materials with DCS youth.</li><li>c) All persons seeking approval must have a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree, at minimum.</li><li>d) Paraprofessionals must receive training that is approved by the Mental Health Coordinator or designee for DCS Central Office for each standardized test or assessment procedure that they administer to DCS youth.</li><li>e) Paraprofessionals must not construe permission to administer one test or procedure as permission to administer any other.</li></ul>
<p><b>B. Recommendations about placement and treatment</b></p>	<p><b>1. Appropriate Qualifications</b></p> <p>Only individuals who meet the above conditions, to include appropriate training, experience and approval to <b>interpret</b> standardized tests may make decisions about placement and treatment.</p> <p><b>2. Placement and treatment recommendations</b></p> <p>All decisions regarding placement and treatment must incorporate all available information and cannot be based upon any single standardized test or measure.</p> <p><b>3. Standardized tests</b></p> <p>Staff may use standardized tests, either group type or individual, as one method of determining the intellectual functioning, academic achievement level, vocational/pre-vocational skills, and general educational needs of each youth.</p> <p><b>4. Clinical interview/testing</b></p> <p>Staff may use a clinical interview and/or test(s) to assess personality and mental status for each youth.</p> <p><b>5. Results of previous testing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Because too frequent testing can yield invalid results, DCS staff must make prompt and diligent efforts to obtain and review the results of previous testing.</li></ul>

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	<p>b) Those results must be shared with appropriate mental health professionals.</p> <p><b>6. Testing for handicap</b></p> <p>Staff must refer or evaluate each youth suspected or known to be handicapped in accordance with the procedures and guidelines stated in the current edition of the <u>Tennessee Department of Education Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards</u>.</p> <p><b>7. Assessment of mental disabilities</b></p> <p>Staff must use standardized measures of adaptive behavior in the assessment of youth suspected or known to be educationally or clinically mentally retarded.</p> <p><b>8. Test result validity</b></p> <p>a) Staff must not consider the results from tests classified as group tests valid for more than twelve (12) months following the date of administration.</p> <p>b) Staff must not consider the results from tests that internal indicators show invalid results or are otherwise unreliable.</p>
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<b>Forms:</b>	<i>None</i>
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<b>Collateral documents:</b>	<i>Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing</i> <i>Tennessee Board of Examiners in Psychology</i> <i>Tennessee Department of Education Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards</i>
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